

## Murphy extends outdoor dining through 2024

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## House of the week

Real Estate Resource



168th YEAR NO. 31 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2022 \$1.00

# Another delay for Franklin Street School project

## Cape May expects to hold special meeting to authorize awarding the contract

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council tabled a resolution authorizing the county to award a contract for the renovation and restoration of the Franklin Street School for use as a new county library branch.

On Aug. 2, Deputy City Manager Lou Belasco said the county has not received a formal document from the low bidder for the project. He said while it looks positive, "nothing was in hand, yet."

Mayor Zack Mullock asked council to be ready for the scheduling of a special meeting to authorize the county to proceed with the contract.

"As soon as we hear from the county, we're good to go," he said. Council had twice delayed authorizing the county to award a contract after cost estimates increased from \$6 million to \$9.1 million.

During public comment, former city councilwoman Patricia Hendricks said authorizing the

contract would be the latest milestone in a project since 2017 when voters approved the state Library Construction Bond.

She lauded the Center for Community Arts (CCA) for its work in preserving the Franklin Street School and local history.

Hendricks said council in 2017 worked with County Commissioner Marie Hayes to create a vision for grant money to renovate the building and create a state-of-the-art branch library. In 2018, the county and county Library

Commission conducted a feasibility study for the project.

The concept received overwhelming support from the African-American community, businesses, schools, the CCA executive board and many city residents, she said.

Council voted 4-1 in 2019 to move forward with the project.

"The three major partners — Cape May County Commissioners, the Cape May County Library Commission and the city of Cape May — committed to paying that

one-third cost of the project," Hendricks said. "In addition to the city and the county funding, we know that the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Grant was awarded to the project in the amount of \$3.4 million."

She said another milestone was the county preparing a construction award for the Franklin Street School.

"The community anxiously waits for the construction to be-

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# Medical cannabis delivery available across the county

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

TRENTON — The state Cannabis Regulatory Commission (CRC) approved home delivery and curbside pickup of medicinal cannabis items on a permanent basis. Curbside pickup has been in temporary operation since March 2020 due to COVID restrictions.

The Botanist, a dispensary located in Egg Harbor Township, will deliver medical cannabis to Cape May County Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

During a meeting July 28, CRC chairwoman Dianna Houenou said draft rules for consumption areas and edible cannabis products would be forthcoming. Guidance for workplace impairment is still under legal review but would be released very soon, she said.

"There's a tremendous amount of interest in all three of these issue areas and not everyone feels the same way about them," Houenou said. "There are varying opinions on how consumption areas, edible products and the workplace should be addressed."

She said it was the intention of the chair and executive director to have the rules on those issues informed by

a variety of stakeholders before they are finalized.

Vice Chairman Sam Delgado said delays in approval of licenses for potential cannabis businesses could cause undue expense or break them financially. He asked that the commission's meeting scheduled for Sept. 22 be moved to earlier in the month.

"So that's why I feel that this commission and staff should use August to challenge ourselves, circle the wagon and go the extra mile," he said. "Let's schedule a meeting for the first week of September and move this marketplace forward."

The board approved moving the meeting to Sept. 2 in a 3-2 vote.

CRC Executive Director Jeff Brown said as of July 27, the commission had received 1,182 applications for both conditional and annual licenses. He said about 80 percent of applications were for conditional licenses.

Only 64 applications had not yet been given a priority review. He said 284 applications need to undergo a completeness check and final scoring.

"We knew that we would receive a ton of applications

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

## Booker visits Tubman Museum

Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., stopped Monday at the Harriet Tubman Museum in Cape May as part of his 2022 Jersey Summer Road Trip, a series of stops highlighting the state's 21 counties. Above, Booker meets Emily Dempsey, a founder of the Center for Community Arts, before touring the museum.

# Southern Mansion vendor gets liquor license

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — While it appeared a 2-1 vote of City Council prevented the transfer of a person-to-person and place-to-place liquor license from the Merion Inn to the New Jersey Farmer's Cooperative Group LLC for use as a vendor at the Southern Mansion, 720 Washington St., further research showed if council had a quorum and

the majority of council vote for a license transfer, it can take place. The city solicitor confirmed the approval to the applicant.

During a meeting Aug. 2, Councilmen Shaine Meier and Mike Yeager voted in favor of the transfer while Councilwoman Lorraine Baldwin voted against it. She said she felt the applicant obtaining a liquor license constituted a change in use of the property and the applica-

tion should have been heard by the city's Zoning Board. As a resident of neighboring Corgie Street, Mayor Zack Mullock abstained from the vote.

City solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said as a five-member council, three positive votes were needed to transfer the license. Council took a five-minute recess following the vote. A motion to reopen the topic failed.

Deputy Mayor Stacy Shee-

han was absent from the meeting. Gillin-Schwartz said Sheehan indicated in an email that she was opposed to the transfer.

The liquor license will be used at the Southern Mansion, a bed and breakfast inn and event facility.

According to the applicant's attorney, Marcus Karavan, the license would have provided alcohol only

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# Cape May loses eight years of City Council recordings

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Due to a lapsed subscription with VIMEO, a live streaming platform, the city lost eight years of videos of City Council meetings.

During a meeting Aug. 2, former councilwoman Patricia Hendricks asked if the city had taken steps to renew its subscription with VIMEO so the videos could be moved to another video platform. Cape May is currently using YouTube to livestream meetings.

Deputy City Manager Lou Belasco said many attempts were made to recover the eight years of videos and all were unsuccessful.

"They canceled our account and immediately deleted all our videos," he said.

Hendricks asked if the city offered to pay \$499 to VIMEO when the subscription ran out. Belasco said the city asked VIMEO for a price to recover the videos.

"They told us they can't do it," he said. "The price didn't even matter."

She asked if the city failed to renew its subscription to VIMEO on time. Belasco said the subscription expired.

He said subscription renewal messages went to an email address of a former employee that was no longer being monitored, resulting in a cancellation. Belasco

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# Science Center opens in Cape May Point

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT— A "groundbreaking" of sorts was held Monday for the Cape May Point Science Center, welcoming future partners, donors and the media for a preview of things to come in the former hotel and retreat for the Sisters of St. Joseph. The building looks virtually untouched from its

days as a religious retreat, perhaps a little more climate controlled than in its former days.

Founder Bob Mullock announced a partnership with Atlantic Cape Community College to develop marine and environmental science programs and research projects to engage students and the community.

He said the passage of the federal Inflation Re-

duction Act would provide some funding to the science center.

Mullock noted the county has a number of low-income families.

"There is a genuine need for higher education at a low cost," Mullock said.

The Mullock family has raised more than \$600,000 through golf tournaments to fund scholarships at Atlantic Cape since 2006. He

said he expected to raise \$100,000 for scholarships for associate degrees in environmental science, biology and marine sciences.

The program would be connected with Rutgers University and upon completion of associate degrees with a 3.5 average, students would receive 75 percent off their future

See Science, Page A5

# NAILED IT. Rusty Nail

The Rusty Nail is back! Our famed surfer bar and restaurant is back open for the 2022 season. Stop by for breakfast, lunch and dinner—as well as delicious cocktails and the coldest draft beer in Cape May (as verified by Exit Zero Magazine).

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